



KEYS 4 DEAF ACCESS

Increasing Options for D/deaf Individuals Impacted by Domestic Violence



Keys 4 D/deaf Access is supported by Grant Number 2011-FW-AX-K004 of the Education, Training, and Enhanced Services to End Violence Against and Abuse of Women with Disabilities Grant Program awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice.

The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women.

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INTRODUCTION

KEYS 4 DEAF ACCESS is the result of a collaboration created by three organizations in Cuyahoga County, Ohio: Cleveland Division of Police, Cleveland Hearing & Speech Center (CHSC), and Domestic Violence & Child Advocacy Center (DVCAC). Funding for the work of the collaboration during the three-year grant period is provided by the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women. The partner agencies are committed to working together to identify, develop, and implement needed organizational change that will result in victims/survivors of domestic violence who are D/deaf or hard of hearing having full access to services. An accessible coordinated response to domestic violence will empower individuals to make choices that maximize their safety.

This charter provides a foundation for the work of the collaboration by detailing our commitment, framework, and direction. It defines our vision, mission, values, and the terms that we use. It identifies the partnering agencies and describes their work, as well as their commitment and contributions to the project. It outlines the manner in which the collaboration team members will communicate, make decisions, and manage conflict. It further describes how we will work to maintain the boundaries of confidentiality and mandatory reporting. It also outlines our work plan throughout the grant period.

The partner agencies believe this collaboration to be the first effort of its kind in Cuyahoga County to create a coordinated response to victims of domestic violence who are D/deaf or hard of hearing. Each partner agency brings unique knowledge and skill to the collaboration. The collaboration recognizes the need to eliminate organizational barriers to accessing quality services that maximize individual choice and safety. With the completion of the collaboration charter, **KEYS 4 DEAF ACCESS** will begin working to identify community needs and prepare a report on the findings. Based upon the findings, a strategic plan will be developed and used to implement needed organizational change within each partner agency. It is our hope that the strength of our partnership will allow for many years of substantive collaborative work and the development of sustainable services for victims/survivors of domestic violence who are D/deaf or hard of hearing.

VISION STATEMENT

KEYS 4 DEAF ACCESS envisions victims/survivors of domestic violence who are D/deaf and hard of hearing having full access to quality services based on best practice. As a result, individuals who are D/deaf or hard of hearing will have a comprehensive understanding of all available options and will be able to make informed decisions when domestic violence impacts their life.

MISSION STATEMENT

KEYS 4 DEAF ACCESS will create sustainable change for victims/survivors of domestic violence who are D/deaf or hard of hearing by fostering collaborative relationships among the partner agencies and implementing needed organizational change to maximize law enforcement interaction, service provision, and choice for individuals.

Through the development and implementation of new policy and procedures, as well as increased learning opportunities within the criminal justice system, direct service agencies, and for victims/survivors who are D/deaf or hard of hearing, there will be greater awareness, understanding, and sensitivity toward individuals impacted by domestic violence. Furthermore, these new policies and procedures will create environments that will allow victims of domestic violence to obtain services to maximize their safety. The result will be that domestic violence victims/survivors who are D/deaf or hard of hearing will receive an accessible systemic response to their victimization.

Critically important to creating sustainable change in our agencies is to ensure that communication is as equally accessible and effective for individuals who are D/deaf or hard of hearing as it is for hearing individuals. Sustainable change will ultimately meet the needs, promote respect, and further empower those who are D/deaf or hard of hearing and who are victims/survivors of domestic violence.

VALUES & ASSUMPTIONS

Values:

Accessibility: We are committed to overcoming any organizational barriers, particularly in the areas of culture and communication, to be able to respond to victims/survivors of domestic violence who are D/deaf or hard of hearing.

Advocacy: We are committed to developing, supporting, and promoting strategies to address barriers to response and ongoing provision of services.

Choice/Self-Determination: We strive to empower individuals to make informed decisions that they believe best meet their needs.

Collaboration/Teamwork: We are committed to working together to advance our vision and mission statements. We believe the strength of our partnership creates a foundation on which we will increase awareness and sensitivity toward victims of domestic violence who are D/deaf or hard of hearing, develop and implement systems change, and build best practices.

Communication: We believe that individuals have the right to choose the mode of communication that best meets their needs. We believe that open, honest, and non-judgemental communication is a vital component of our work.

Confidentiality: We support an individual's right to manage and disclose personal information and we are committed to respecting the mandated reporting requirements of each partner agency.

Continuing Education: We value skilled staff throughout each partner agency who can provide quality trauma-informed services to victims/survivors of domestic violence who are D/deaf or hard of hearing. We believe it is vital for staff to obtain ongoing training and continuing education to remain current with best practices.

Empowerment: We stand for an environment where individuals can make decisions and move forward with their lives free from bias, coercion, and fear.

Inclusiveness: We embrace individual differences and believe within these differences is a wealth of information that enhances understanding and strengthens partnerships.

Integrity: We are committed to our vision, mission, and values, and are mindful that our actions must be in line with them in order to maintain credibility with individuals and systems we seek to support.

Respect: We practice compassionate treatment of others without regard to age, race, ethnicity, communication differences, national origin, gender, ability, income, sexual orientation, marital status, politics, or religion. We believe in the inherent strength of all people.

Safety: All individuals have the right to be free from emotional and physical harm and enjoy relationships based on equality and trust. We promote the empowerment of individuals to be able to identify, assess, and respond to any risk in their relationships.

Self-Reliance: We are committed to assisting members of the D/deaf community who have experienced domestic violence to use their own capabilities, judgement, and resources for making decisions.

Sustainability: We are committed to recommending and implementing changes that can and will be maintained long term. Transformation of organizational practice is critical to the achievement of our vision and mission statements.

Trauma-Informed Care: We promote the use of the principles of trauma-informed care that is centered on the understanding of trauma and its impact on individuals when providing services in order to minimize the possibility of re-victimization.

Welcoming environments: We recognize the importance of providing a safe, inviting, and comfortable physical location as well as emotional atmosphere in which victims/survivors of domestic violence who are D/deaf or hard of hearing have full access to quality services.

Assumptions:

Often referred to as battering, relationship abuse, or intimate partner violence, domestic violence is behavior used to establish power and control over someone through fear and intimidation. It often includes the threat or use of violence and can include physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, and economic abuse. Acts of domestic violence may not always meet the criteria for criminal prosecution.

Victims of domestic violence represent all backgrounds and may be of any age, race, ethnicity, communication difference, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, or ability. D/deaf women are at a greater risk than hearing women of being victimized, but we do not minimize domestic violence relationships in which the victims are male.

Negative perceptions or lack of understanding by law enforcement and/or service providers about a D/deaf or hard of hearing individual limits access to information and services.

Due to communication barriers, isolation, and limited access to information, many D/deaf individuals do not know how to identify domestic violence and may accept abusive behaviors, unaware that there are services and options available.

Due to limited knowledge of the communication needs of D/deaf and hard of hearing victims, community agencies and law enforcement often inadequately respond to the needs of these individuals. Given professional training and support, we believe there will be greatly enhanced services for these same individuals.

The development and implementation of new policies and procedures will result in sustainable change in each partner agency, maximizing accessibility and safety for domestic violence victims who are D/deaf or hard of hearing.

MEMBER AGENCIES

Cleveland Division of Police

The Cleveland Division of Police, as it is known today, was established on May 01, 1866 with the passage of the Metropolitan Police Act. In 1903, it was classified as a division of the Department of Public Safety headed by the Director of Public Safety. The highest priority of the Division of Police is to provide public safety. To efficiently and effectively accomplish this, the Division is divided into three areas of responsibility: Administrative Operations, Field Operations, and Homeland Special Operations. Today, more than 1600 dedicated men and women make up the second largest police force in the State of Ohio. The Cleveland Division of Police strives to strengthen our neighborhoods and improve the quality of life by delivering superior services with professionalism, respect, integrity, dedication and excellence by working in partnership with the community.

The Cleveland Division of Police serves the residents of Cleveland, Ohio and any victim of a crime occurring within the city limits. The Cleveland Division of Police provides a broad range of services:

- Response to citizen calls for assistance through uniformed patrol activities
- Community interaction via DARE programs, Community Relations, Auxiliary Police, and patrols
- Bureau of Traffic provides traffic and crowd control at major events, investigates serious traffic accidents, and ensures the safety of children walking to and from school
- Detective bureaus specialize in specific crimes such as auto theft, fraud, arson, homicide, sex crimes, and youth domestic violence
- Technical support provides photo lab services as well as forensic and crime scene analysis
- Homeland Special Operations is responsible for monitoring and responding to threats to homeland security within the City of Cleveland. Included are the Intelligence Unit, Canine Unit, Bomb Squad, City Hall Security, and Mayor's Security Detail
- Airport Unit is responsible for security at Cleveland Hopkins International Airport and the Aviation Unit provides air support to the Division of Police

The Cleveland Division of Police provides first responders to domestic violence calls to such a high degree (19,670 calls in 2010) that domestic violence is the number one call in the city. Within the Cleveland Division of Police is a Domestic Violence Unit that began 12 years ago and investigates complaints resulting in over 5000 court cases per year. The Unit operates in 3 districts and partners with victim service agencies to serve victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

Cleveland Hearing & Speech Center (CHSC)

The Cleveland Hearing & Speech Center is the oldest free standing nonprofit hearing, speech, and deafness center in the United States and has over 90 years of experience in serving individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. CHSC is the only local organization devoted solely to serving individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have communication difficulties. Established in 1921 as “The Cleveland Area Lip Readers’ Guild, the organization provided lip reading instruction for hard of hearing adults. After steadily expanding its services during its early decades, this organization merged with Western Reserve University’s speech clinic in 1945 to become Cleveland Hearing & Speech Center. CHSC’s affiliation with Case Western Reserve University continues to this day. CHSC’s mission is “to serve, advocate for, and empower individuals with diverse communication abilities and to increase public awareness and sensitivity about hearing loss, deafness, speech-language, and related literacy issues.” Today, CHSC serves more than 10,000 Northeast Ohioans, providing clinical services in speech-language pathology, audiology and pediatric neuropsychology, outreach to families of infants and toddlers who are deaf or have profound hearing loss, and services for those who are deaf or hard of hearing. CHSC’s Community Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, the first center of its kind in Ohio, was established in 1975 and provides case management, advocacy, information and referral, and sign language interpreting services. CHSC is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) and the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID), and is a certified Medicaid and Medicare provider.

Cleveland Hearing & Speech Center serves adults and children who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have communication challenges throughout Northeast Ohio. CHSC offers a wide variety of programs and services:

- 24-hour sign language interpreting
- American Sign Language instruction
- C-print
- Neuropsychological assessment for individuals 4-21 years of age who are deaf or hard of hearing to evaluate cognitive strengths and weaknesses
- Support services for individuals and families
- Advocacy
- Deaf-to-Deaf advocacy
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) consultation
- Information and referral services
- Summer youth programs
- Screenings for all ages at the agency, in schools, and in the workplace
- Comprehensive hearing testing and assessment of auditory processing skills

- Hearing aid sales, fitting, programming, and testing to ensure proper fit and function
- Strategies for living with hearing loss and communicating effectively
- Second Choices program to teach children about hearing protection, hearing loss prevention, and noise management
- Interactive display of assistive listening/alerting devices such as flashing doorbells and vibrating alarms
- Financial assistance programs for hearing aids and assistive listening/alerting devices
- Family-focused outreach service for infants and toddlers (age birth to 3 years) free of charge
- Complete information on communication options, hearing loss, amplification, assistive listening devices, and cochlear implants
- Home visits

Domestic Violence & Child Advocacy Center (DVCAC)

Domestic Violence & Child Advocacy Center is a trusted leader in empowering individuals, educating the community, and advocating for justice to end domestic violence and child abuse. DVCAC envisions a community in which all people enjoy lives free from violence and abuse and feel safe and secure in their relationships.

Domestic Violence & Child Advocacy Center is the new name for the recently merged Domestic Violence Center and Bellflower Center for the Prevention of Child Abuse. Bringing together the experience, expertise, dedication, and networks of these two organizations will have a tremendous impact on child abuse and domestic violence in our county while better educating the community about them.

Child abuse and domestic violence are traditionally addressed independently, and as separate issues. The goal is to acknowledge that both child and adult victimization occur during child abuse or domestic violence and to better serve children, adult caregivers, and domestic violence victims with an understanding of how each impacts the other. DVCAC acknowledges that child abuse and domestic violence are often related and that they are parts of a continuum of relationship abuse which includes:

- Physical and Sexual Child Abuse
- Bullying
- Teen Dating Abuse
- Intimate Partner Violence
- Stalking
- Elder Abuse/Domestic Violence Grown Old

DVCAC has Seven Tenets to its Model of Services:

- Prevention
- Intervention with Children and Teens
- Intervention with Domestic Violence Victims, Non-offending Caregivers, and Adult Survivors of Child Abuse
- Intervention with Families
- Strong Community Partnerships
- Community Education and Professional Trainings
- Leadership, Public Policy, and Social Change

DVCAC's Purpose is:

- To prevent and reduce incidences of domestic violence and child abuse through education and public awareness.
- To ensure the safety of the child victim, the non-offending caregiver, or domestic violence victim through a coordinated, holistic approach to individuals and families.
- To support the adult and offer guidance through the process of the judicial and DCFS systems.
- To meet the needs of the child and adult victim in dealing with their trauma.
- To create the most effective child, adult, and family-focused system response for victims.

COMMITMENT & CONTRIBUTIONS:

KEYS 4 DEAF ACCESS partnering agencies are firmly committed to promoting sustainable improvements within the Cuyahoga County law enforcement and service delivery systems for victims/survivors of domestic violence who are D/deaf or hard of hearing. The Collaborative's partnering agencies are all committed to the core principles of safety and self-determination. Our agencies will work to make needed changes to address the physical environment and cultural mindset of the organizations to provide a safe and welcoming place for victims/survivors. Increasing staff sensitivity, knowledge, and awareness regarding individuals who are D/deaf or hard of hearing will enhance their ability to provide quality services. Additionally, each agency will review, revise, and/or develop organizational policy to advance needed change that will result in more accessible, safe, and effective services. The combination of active working partnerships and sustainable changes made at each partnering agency will result in the creation of best practices. The following outlines what the collaboration team members and each partner agency are willing to commit and contribute to achieve this.

Collaboration team members will:

- diligently work together in the planning and development phase as well as the implementation phase as representatives for each individual partner agency
- create the required deliverables (Collaboration Charter, Needs Assessment Plan, Needs Assessment Report, and Strategic Plan)
- meet weekly for a minimum of three hours; meeting times will be adjusted to be longer or more frequent as needed
- participate in Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) and VERA Institute of Justice (VERA) technical assistance meetings and trainings; the project coordinator will maintain regular contact with VERA technical assistance staff
- ensure each agency develops and participates in cross-training
- keep their agencies informed as to the progress of the collaboration and its activities
- share the current protocols and practices of their agency with the collaboration to evaluate effectiveness and identify concerns regarding barriers to agency responsiveness, best practices, and any need for organizational change
- recommend new protocols, specific to the needs of our local D/deaf community, to our respective agencies

Each individual partner agency further commits and will contribute as follows:

- Cleveland Division of Police will:
 - follow the guidelines of the Memorandum of Understanding with OVW
 - identify and engage law enforcement personnel to participate in the Needs Assessment
 - provide knowledge and expertise regarding law enforcement procedures and issues specific to domestic violence victims who are D/deaf or hard of hearing
 - develop and implement new policies and procedures resulting in sustainable change and maximizing accessibility and safety for domestic violence victims who are D/deaf or hard of hearing

- Cleveland Hearing and Speech Center (CHSC) will:
 - follow the guidelines of the Memorandum of Understanding with OVW
 - employ the Project Advocate
 - identify and engage D/deaf and hard of hearing individuals, professionals, and community members to participate in the Needs Assessment
 - provide knowledge, expertise, and services regarding individuals who are D/deaf and hard of hearing
 - develop and implement new policies and procedures resulting in sustainable change and maximizing accessibility and safety for domestic violence victims who are D/deaf or hard of hearing

- Domestic Violence & Child Advocacy Center (DVCAC) will:
 - follow the guidelines of The Memorandum of Understanding with OVW
 - serve as the fiscal agent
 - employ and supervise the Project Coordinator and Project Assistant
 - identify and engage victims/survivors of domestic violence, professionals, and community members to participate in the Needs Assessment
 - provide knowledge, expertise, and services regarding domestic violence
 - develop and implement new policies and procedures resulting in sustainable change and maximizing accessibility and safety for domestic violence victims who are D/deaf or hard of hearing

COMMUNICATION PLAN

Team members recognize that effective communication is absolutely critical to building and maintaining the collaboration and to successful outcomes in our work throughout the project. Communication must be consistent in promoting the vision, mission, and values in order to maximize credibility and community support. We will create an atmosphere that promotes quality communication and results in inclusiveness and respect for all perspectives. Working within such an atmosphere will foster discussions that lead to successful implementation of our project.

Internal Communication

Meetings - Team members will meet weekly for a minimum of three hours; meeting times will be adjusted to be longer or more frequent as needed. The project coordinator will create the agenda for each meeting with input from team members and will e-mail the agenda to team members in advance of the meeting. When a team member is unable to attend a meeting, the meeting will be held and the team member who was unable to attend will be informed as to the discussion held. Final decisions may be made with the permission of the team member who is unable to attend. Minutes from each meeting will be e-mailed to team members and maintained for future reference.

Primary form of communication - Electronic mail will be the primary form of communication among team members outside of collaboration meetings. Information may also be communicated through telephone conversations or texting. Team members are responsible for providing a prompt response to requests for information or feedback. A prompt response is expected within a 24 hour time period unless the individual is on vacation.

Information storage - Team members will use google.docs/dropbox for the purpose of sharing and storing collaboration documents.

Organizational communication - Team members are responsible for providing information about the work of the collaboration to their own organization. Team members are also responsible for providing relevant information about their own organization to one another. Partner agency leadership has an open invitation to attend any collaboration team meeting. Meetings with leadership will be held at key points in the process for team members to provide ongoing progress reports and information and to receive feedback. The project coordinator will send e-mail updates to executive directors regarding the status of deliverables and throughout the project as needed.

Confidentiality - Team members are likely to share personal experiences or detailed agency information such as policies, procedures, budget information, and specific organizational concerns. Such information is expected to remain confidential.

External Communication

The project coordinator is the designated person for communicating with a technical assistant at VERA Institute of Justice (VERA) and disseminating that information to team members. The project coordinator will participate in regularly scheduled one-on-one telephone calls with a VERA technical assistant and will participate in conference calls with VERA and other project coordinators. The project coordinator is also responsible for submitting deliverables to VERA for review and reporting feedback to team members.

The fiscal agent will act as the primary contact with Office on Violence Against Women (OVW). The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for forwarding grant reports and requests for budget modifications. The project coordinator is responsible for submitting deliverables for final approval and reporting feedback to team members.

The project coordinator is the primary contact person for incoming and outgoing information with outside parties such as interested individuals, community agencies, and organizations. The project coordinator will determine the most appropriate person to address specific situations or requests for information as they occur.

Media Plan

Partner agencies are expected to follow the media guidelines for their respective agency. Media representatives from each agency will use the information provided by the collaboration team members for their response to a media request. Information provided will be updated as needed. If the provided information does not address the media request, the collaboration will determine the next step. If the contacted agency needs additional input from another partner agency before responding to a request, a media representative from the other partner agency will be contacted.

Contact with the media needs to be documented. A form to document contacts will be provided for each agency to complete and return to the project coordinator. (see page 16)

Media Information

Collaboration Partners:

Cleveland Division of Police, Cleveland Hearing & Speech Center, and Domestic Violence & Child Advocacy Center

Length of the project:

Three-year initiative began in October 2011 and is divided into two phases:

Planning & Development Phase - Four components: creation of a collaboration charter, a community needs assessment, a report on the findings, and the completion of a strategic plan

Implementation Phase - Follows the strategic plan to make needed organizational change that will maximize accessibility, safety, choice, and services for victims/survivors of domestic violence who are D/deaf or hard of hearing

Funded through the Education, Training and Enhanced Services to End Violence Against and Abuse of Women with Disabilities Program from the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women (grant 2011-FW-AX-K004)

Focus of the project:

- Foster collaborative relationships
- Create and implement sustainable organizational change
- Maximize law enforcement interaction, safety, service provision, and choice for D/deaf and hard of hearing individuals impacted by domestic violence

Reasons for the project:

Victims of domestic violence who are D/deaf or hard of hearing need full access to law enforcement and quality services from community agencies.

Organizations must make needed changes to provide an environment where individuals can obtain and give information through the mode of communication that best meets their needs.

Policies and procedures must be developed that will result in more accessible, safe, and effective services.

For further information:

Contact the Project Coordinator
Deborah McMyler, MA, LSW, RASS
Domestic Violence & Child Advocacy Center
216.229.2420 ext. 225
dmcmlyer@dvcac.org

Keys 4 D/deaf Access Media Contact Form

Source of Media Request: _____

Date: _____

Name of Contact Person: _____

Address: _____

Phone #: _____

E-mail: _____

Information requested: _____

Agency providing response: _____

Outcome/comments: _____

Problems/concerns: _____

DECISION-MAKING PROTOCOL

Process

Decision-making for the collaboration will be achieved through a consensus-building process based on the presentation of facts and thorough, thoughtful discussion of all viewpoints. For this purpose,

”consensus means that people comprehend the final decision, have committed themselves to executing the chosen course of action, feel a sense of collective ownership about the plan, and are willing to cooperate with others during the implementation effort” (Michael Roberto, Professor of Management, Bryant University).

The use of a consensus-building process embraces and respects the fact that each team member brings unique and valuable experiences, knowledge, and opinions to all discussions.

The collaboration team members will use a decision-making point system for situations where consensus cannot be reached. Once the issue is identified and agreed upon, all team members will be asked to evaluate their position based on the following scale:

- 1) Strongly agree
- 2) Agree with some concerns
- 3) Undecided with additional information or discussion needed
- 4) Disagree, but open to discussion
- 5) Strongly disagree and will not support it

The team will move forward with the decision if all of the positions are a 1 or 2. If all positions are a 1, 2, or 3, the team will not confirm the decision and will continue the discussion or revisit the issue at the next meeting. If any of the positions are a 4 or 5, the discussion will continue with a subsequent evaluation of everyone’s position. If no decision is reached, it will be tabled until the next meeting to enable individuals to evaluate and/or obtain additional information regarding their position. When consensus cannot be reached and a decision must be made, the team will refer to the conflict management plan described in this charter. Team members will honor all decisions that result from this process.

Partner Authority

In addition, the collaboration recognizes that the Collaboration Team, Fiscal Agent, and Executive Directors/Chief of Police have specific authority to make certain decisions vital to the direction of this project. Specific decision-making authority is as follows:

Collaboration Team***

Develop job description, interview questions, interview, and select a project coordinator

Create a work plan to complete deliverables, including the breakdown of responsibilities for team members and a timeline for completion

Determine the readiness of work product for submission to VERA Institute of Justice for technical support

Submit final deliverables to Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) for approval

Recommend changes to agency policy and procedures

Fiscal Agent

Employ and supervise the Project Coordinator and Project Assistant

Manage the budget and request budget modifications if needed

Submit required reports to Office on Violence Against Women

Executive Directors/Chief of Police

Approve and sign Memorandums of Understanding

Determine which staff member(s) will represent the agency as part of the collaboration team

Attend and participate in collaboration team meetings to obtain project updates and to provide feedback

Approve recommended changes to agency policy and procedures

***The collaboration team consists of representatives from each agency, including the project coordinator. As a team, we mutually agree that no single individual has the unilateral authority to make decisions. Our consensus model is truly representative of our collaboration team.

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT PLAN

Collaboration team members acknowledge that conflict is a natural part of the group process. Conflict by itself is not a problem; poor conflict management or a lack of conflict management is the problem. Although inadequately managed conflict has the potential to negatively impact forward progress in achieving goals, conflict can be successfully managed in a way that promotes a new understanding and strengthens relationships. To retain the trust developed among team members, it is agreed that team members will address conflict in the following manner:

Encourage all team members to be heard as it relates to the particular issue or situation.

Practice effective communication where each team member openly shares his/her opinion and actively listens to the perspective of others.

Create a clear statement of the conflict by identifying and clarifying the issue or situation to be addressed.

Determine possible solutions to the conflict.

Where there is no obvious solution acceptable to all team members, determine whether the issue can be tabled and revisited at a later time in order to obtain additional information or have time to review the issue or whether it is critical to come to a decision promptly.

Determine whether the consensus is to acknowledge the disagreement and to proceed with the understanding that there is disagreement.

If the conflict cannot be managed by following this process, the collaboration may contact VERA Institute of Justice (VERA) for technical assistance or may invite a representative of a partner agency's executive leadership to assist. Any suggestions from VERA staff or executive leadership will be presented to the team members for further discussion on the issue.

The goal is to manage conflict in a manner that is respectful and fair to all team members.

CONFIDENTIALITY

In order to identify, create, and implement needed organizational change, the work of the collaboration is dependent on the sharing of sensitive information among team members. In sharing such information, the collaboration is mindful of the safety and dignity of clients and respects the confidentiality policies and General Police Orders of the partner agencies. Service providers further abide by the confidentiality guidelines of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

With respect to confidentiality, General Police Orders for the Cleveland Division of Police address the release of public information and outline certain information that must be withheld from public disclosure. Information which must be withheld from specific reports includes, but is not limited to, social security numbers, the identity of a witness or confidential information source, and “information that would endanger the life or physical safety of law enforcement personnel, a crime victim, a witness, or a confidential information source” (GPO 1.3.01). Furthermore, unless required by law, Cleveland Division of Police personnel shall not reveal the name of the complainant to the person complained of when investigating a police matter (GPO 1.3.27).

Cleveland Hearing & Speech Center and Domestic Violence & Child Advocacy Center require employees to sign a confidentiality agreement as a condition of employment. Violation of the agreement may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. The overall substance of the confidentiality requirement for both agencies is similar. Clients are assured that their information and records are protected and held in the strictest confidence. CHSC’s agreement further specifies that client information and agency work product remain protected upon termination of the employee. In addition, a violation of CHSC’s confidentiality agreement may result in civil or criminal legal action in extreme situations.

Confidentiality of Team Members & Collaborating Agency Information

The work of the Collaboration is focused on victims/survivors of domestic violence who are D/deaf or hard or hearing receiving full access to quality services in order to be able to make informed decisions that best meet their needs. For the purpose of identifying needed organizational change, individual team members are likely to share personal experiences or detailed agency information such as policies, procedures, budget information, and specific organizational concerns. Such information is to be held in the strictest of confidence in order to promote open and honest communication. Team member and collaborating agency information is considered confidential and will not be shared outside of the collaborative.

Confidentiality of Client Information

Information regarding specific individuals who have received service or are receiving service from partner agencies may be shared among team members solely for the purpose of identifying needed organizational change. Team members will be mindful not to use identifying information. A team member may describe the experience of a specific individual in order to illustrate how the system response was or was not accessible and appropriate. This information is to be held in the strictest confidence. Client information is considered confidential and will not be shared outside of the collaborative without written permission from the client.

Needs Assessment participants will be informed of confidentiality and mandatory reporting requirements prior to participation. Identifying and personal client information will not be included in the Needs Assessment or Strategic Plan. The Needs Assessment Report will be comprised of cumulative data, qualitative and quantitative information, and direct participant quotes with all identifying information removed. Needs assessment participant information is to be held in the strictest confidence and will not be shared outside of the collaborative.

MANDATORY REPORTING

Ohio law does not include D/deaf individuals, specifically, in the mandatory reporting statutes. It does make provisions for the mandatory reporting of suspected child abuse/neglect, the abuse/neglect/exploitation of an elder adult, and the suspected abuse/neglect of an individual with developmental disabilities. Mandatory reporting involving a D/deaf individual is necessary if the situation meets the requirements of any of the existing statutes.

Collaboration team members recognize that confidentiality does not negate a responsibility under Ohio law to report suspected child abuse/neglect, the abuse, neglect, or exploitation of an elder adult, and suspected abuse/neglect of a developmentally disabled individual. Per Ohio Revised Code (ORC) 2151.421(A)(1)(a), a child is an individual “under eighteen years of age” or an individual “mentally retarded, developmentally disabled, or physically impaired” who is “under twenty-one years of age”. For a victim of elder abuse, the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) 5101.60(B), defines an adult as “any person sixty years of age or older within this state who is handicapped by the infirmities of aging or who has a physical or mental impairment which prevents the person from providing for the person’s own care or protection, and who resides in an independent living arrangement”.

Per ORC 2151.421(A)(1)(a), only certain professionals who are “acting in an official or professional capacity” and know, or have “reasonable cause to suspect based on facts that would cause a reasonable person in a similar position to suspect” the abuse/neglect of a child are required to report it. ORC 2151.421(A)(1)(b) outlines the certain professionals who are required to report: “...speech pathologist or audiologist... person engaged in social work or the practice of professional counseling”, and many others. In addition, ORC 2151.421(B) states that “anyone who knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect...that a child... has suffered or faces a threat of suffering... abuse or neglect...may report or cause reports to be made...”. Furthermore, per ORC 2151.421(D)(1), “when a municipal or county peace officer receives a report concerning the possible abuse or neglect of a child or the possible threat of abuse or neglect of a child, upon receipt of the report, the municipal or county peace officer who receives the report shall refer the report to the appropriate public children services agency”. All collaboration team members and many additional staff members of the partner agencies are mandated reporters of suspected child abuse/neglect. For mandated professionals, failure to report suspected child abuse/neglect is a misdemeanor of the fourth degree or first degree as outlined in ORC 2151.99(C)(1)(2).

Per ORC 5101.61(A), “...any peace officer, ...and any person engaged in social work or counseling having reasonable cause to believe that an adult is being abused, neglected, or exploited, or is in a condition which is the result of abuse, neglect, or exploitation shall immediately report such belief to the county department of job and family services”. Furthermore, per ORC 5101.61(B), “any person having reasonable cause to believe that an adult has suffered abuse, neglect, or exploitation may report, or cause reports to be made of such belief”. All collaboration team members and many additional staff members of the partner agencies are mandated to report the abuse, neglect, or exploitation of an adult.

Per ORC 5123.61(C)(1), “any person listed in division (C)(2) of this section, having reason to believe that a person with mental retardation or a developmental disability has suffered or faces a substantial risk of suffering any wound, injury, disability, or condition of such a nature as to reasonably indicate abuse or neglect of that person, shall immediately report or cause reports to be made of such information to...a law enforcement agency or to the county board of developmental disabilities”. ORC 5123.61(C)(2)(b) states “all of the following persons are required to make a report under division (C)(1) of this section: any... social worker, psychologist” or “...peace officer...”. All collaboration team members and many additional staff members of the partner agencies are mandated reporters of suspected abuse/neglect of an individual with developmental disabilities.

During the needs assessment phase of this project, participants will not be asked to describe any specific domestic violence incidents. Understanding that an incident of domestic violence may not meet the statutory definition of abuse, team members recognize that there is a possibility that disclosures requiring a mandatory report may occur. Needs assessment participants will be advised of the legal requirements to report suspected abuse/neglect. In addition, they will be informed that their identity and personal information will be kept confidential except for:

disclosures of known or suspected child abuse/neglect which will be reported to the Cuyahoga County Department of Children & Family Services per the Ohio Revised Code.

disclosures of abuse, neglect, or exploitation of an adult which will be reported to Cuyahoga County Adult Protective Services per the Ohio Revised Code.

disclosures of abuse/neglect of an individual with a developmental disability which will be reported to law enforcement or the Cuyahoga County Board of Developmental Disabilities.

ORC 2151.421(C)(1) requires a written report to include “the names and addresses of the child and the child’s parents or the person or persons having custody of the child, if known”. ORC 2151.421(C)(2) further requires a report to include “the child’s age and the extent of the child’s injuries, abuse, or neglect that is known or reasonably suspected...to have occurred or of the threat of injury, abuse or neglect that is known or reasonably suspected...to exist, including any evidence of previous injuries, abuse, or neglect”. Similarly, ORC 5101.61(C)(1) requires a written report to include “the name, address, and approximate age of the adult who is the subject of the report”. ORC 5101.61(C)(3) further requires a written report to include “the nature and extent of the alleged abuse, neglect, or exploitation of the adult”. ORC 5123.61(D)(1)(2) requires a written report to include “the names and addresses of the person with mental retardation or a developmental disability and the person’s custodian, if known” as well as the age of the person. By gathering limited identifying and personal participant information and not inquiring about specific incidents of domestic violence, it will likely minimize the number of situations that might require a mandatory report as outlined in the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) during the needs assessment phase of this project.

Collaboration team members understand the parameters of the mandatory reporting statutes and will abide by them.

WORK PLAN

The Work Plan is a guide for the activities of the collaboration team and will be revised as needed. The time frame for the grant is 01 October 2011 to 30 September 2014.

| <u>Activity</u> | <u>Timeline</u> | <u>Tasks</u> |
|---|--------------------------------|---|
| Grant Awarded | 09.16.2011 | |
| New Grantee Orientation | October 2011 | |
| Project Coordinator Hired | 08.06.2012 | |
| Create Collaboration Charter | August 2012 – October 2012 | Complete all 11 elements w/VERA feedback |
| *Submit Charter to OVW for approval | 10.25.2012 | |
| Needs Assessment Planning | November 2012 – March 2013 | Methodology, data collection, sampling w/VERA feedback |
| *Submit Needs Assessment Plan to OVW for approval | March 2013 | |
| Conduct Needs Assessment | April 2013 – May 2013 | |
| Prepare Needs Assessment Report (ongoing) | March 2013 – August 2013 | Analyze data, determine findings w/VERA feedback |
| *Submit Needs Assessment Report to OVW for approval | August 2013 | |
| Develop Strategic Plan | September 2013 – November 2013 | Review findings, recommend policy changes, identify implementation strategies & costs w/VERA feedback |
| *Submit Strategic Plan to OVW for approval | November 2013 | |
| Implement Strategic Plan | January 2014 – September 2014 | |

SIGNIFICANT TERMS:

Collaboration team members have identified terms that are significant to our work together. To achieve consistency in our language, we agree that the following terms used in this charter and throughout this project are defined as follows:

Accessibility: The level to which an individual has the ability to communicate, understand, and fully participate in the services of an organization.

Agency/Organization: Refers to any of the participating collaboration entities.

American Sign Language (ASL): A visual language that follows its own rules of grammar and syntax that are different from the English language. Information is expressed through a combination of hand shapes, body movements, and facial expressions.

Collaboration: "A mutually beneficial and well-defined relationship entered into by two or more organizations to achieve results they are more likely to achieve together than alone. This relationship includes commitment to mutual relationships and goals; a jointly developed structure and shared responsibility; mutual authority and accountability for success; and sharing of resources and awards." Accessing Safety Initiative: www.accessingsafety.org

Communication Barrier: An obstacle that prevents equal access to information and/or services.

Confidentiality: Ensuring the privacy of client identity and information, agency protocol and practices, and any information shared throughout the work of the collaboration.

Consensus: "Consensus means that people comprehend the final decision, have committed themselves to executing the chosen course of action, feel a sense of collective ownership about the plan, and are willing to cooperate with others during the implementation effort."
(Michael Roberto, Professor of Management, Bryant University)

Deaf/deaf: Capital "D" Deaf refers to individuals with a profound loss of hearing who communicate primarily through the use of American Sign Language, associate with the Deaf community, and identify with Deaf culture. Lower case "d" deaf refers to individuals with hearing loss (may include hard of hearing individuals as well) who associate with the hearing community and do not necessarily rely on American Sign Language to communicate.

Domestic violence: Behavior(s) in which an individual seeks to obtain and maintain control over a family or household member through verbal, physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, and/or financial abuse.

Acts of domestic violence may not always meet the criteria for criminal prosecution.

The legal definition per the Ohio Revised Code is as follows:

2919.25 Domestic violence (criminal section)

(A) No person shall knowingly cause or attempt to cause physical harm to a family or household member.

(B) No person shall recklessly cause serious physical harm to a family or household member.

(C) No person, by threat of force, shall knowingly cause a family or household member to believe that the offender will cause imminent physical harm to the family or household member.

F) As used in this section and sections 2919.251 and 2919.26 of the Revised Code:

1) "Family or household member" means any of the following:

(a) Any of the following who is residing or has resided with the offender:

(i) A spouse, a person living as a spouse, or a former spouse of the offender;

(ii) A parent, a foster parent, or a child of the offender, or another person related by consanguinity or affinity to the offender;

(iii) A parent or a child of a spouse, person living as a spouse, or former spouse of the offender, or another person related by consanguinity or affinity to a spouse, person living as a spouse, or former spouse of the offender.

(b) The natural parent of any child of whom the offender is the other natural parent or is the putative other natural parent.

(2) "Person living as a spouse" means a person who is living or has lived with the offender in a common law marital relationship, who otherwise is cohabiting with the offender, or who otherwise has cohabited with the offender within five years prior to the date of the alleged commission of the act in question.

Amended by 128th General Assembly File No. 50, SB 58, § 1, eff. 9/17/2010.

3113.31 Domestic violence (civil section)

(A) As used in this section:

(1) "Domestic violence" means the occurrence of one or more of the following acts against a family or household member:

(a) Attempting to cause or recklessly causing bodily injury;

(b) Placing another person by the threat of force in fear of imminent serious physical harm or committing a violation of section 2903.211 (menacing by stalking) or 2911.211 (aggravated trespass) of the Revised Code;

(c) Committing any act with respect to a child that would result in the child being an abused child, as defined in section 2151.031 of the Revised Code;

(d) Committing a sexually oriented offense.

(2) "Court" means the domestic relations division of the court of common pleas in counties that have a domestic relations division and the court of common pleas in counties that do not have a domestic relations division, or the juvenile division of the court of common pleas of the county in which the person to be protected by a protection order issued or a consent agreement approved under this section resides if the respondent is less than eighteen years of age.

(3) "Family or household member" means any of the following:

(a) Any of the following who is residing with or has resided with the respondent:

(i) A spouse, a person living as a spouse, or a former spouse of the respondent;

(ii) A parent, a foster parent, or a child of the respondent, or another person related by consanguinity or affinity to the respondent;

(iii) A parent or a child of a spouse, person living as a spouse, or former spouse of the respondent, or another person related by consanguinity or affinity to a spouse, person living as a spouse, or former spouse of the respondent.

(b) The natural parent of any child of whom the respondent is the other natural parent or is the putative other natural parent.

(4) “Person living as a spouse” means a person who is living or has lived with the respondent in a common law marital relationship, who otherwise is cohabiting with the respondent, or who otherwise has cohabited with the respondent within five years prior to the date of the alleged occurrence of the act in question.

(5) “Victim advocate” means a person who provides support and assistance for a person who files a petition under this section.

(6) “Sexually oriented offense” has the same meaning as in section 2950.01 of the Revised Code.

Empowerment: “The process of increasing the capacity of individuals or groups to make choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes.” www.worldbank.org

Inclusion: The right of an individual to use his/her abilities to participate and contribute in a meaningful way while embracing the value of diversity.

Respect: Valuing all individuals and their points of view.

Safety: An individually determined perception of protection from physical, emotional, and psychological harm or situations which may threaten harm.

Services: Refers to assistance provided to an individual including, but not limited to: information, referral, treatment, and consultation.

Survivor: An individual who has experienced an incident or a series of incidents of domestic violence and has begun the physical, cognitive and emotional healing process.

Systems change: The process of revamping the policies, practices, culture, and resources within the organization that includes ongoing assessment of needs resulting in sustained improvement.

Trauma-informed: The knowledge, awareness and understanding that affect and behavior is directly impacted by trauma. Being trauma-informed allows organizations to adopt policies and procedures that minimize re-victimization.

Victim: An individual who is threatened, harmed, or adversely affected by an act or a series of acts of domestic violence and may include one who has experienced violence and control in an abusive relationship.

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Cleveland, Ohio 44106
216.231.8787
www.chsc.org

Domestic Violence & Child Advocacy Center (DVCAC)
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216.229.2420
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

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This charter may be revised by future team members to meet the evolving needs of the collaboration. The following collaboration team members are the original authors of this charter and worked diligently to build a strong relationship among the partner agencies:

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Special thanks to partner agency staff and to the community members who contributed their knowledge, creativity, and insight to our project.